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Siting Board - 1-12-2017 - 15-F-0040

NEW YORK STATE
BOARD ON ELECTRIC GENERATION SITING AND
THE ENVIRONMENT

MEETING, SITING BOARD
Videoconference
January 12, 2017
Albany, New York

AUDREY ZIBELMAN, CHAIR
Three Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York

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CHAIR ZIBELMAN: Okay. Well first of all, I want to thank everybody for accommodating my schedule change, so I appreciate -- I appreciate that.

I'd like to call this session of the Permanent Members of the New York State Board on Electric Generation Siting and Environment, constituted pursuant to former Article 10 of the Public Service Law, which remains in effect today, as to certain matters, including this certificate amendment to be considered today.

I'm Audrey Zibelman. I'm Chair of the New York Public -- State Public Service Commission and I'm also Chair of the Siting Board.

Today's session is being conducted through the use of videoconferencing as allowed by law. Some members are participating from New York City and others are participating from Albany.

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2 With me in New York, is Vincent Ravaschiere,
3 who's an alternate -- alternate for Howard Zemsky, the
4 Commissioner of Economic Development and President and -- and
5 C.E.O. of Empire State Development.

6 In Albany, we have Scott Bassin -- Bassinson.
7 Did I get that right?

8 MR. BASSINSON: Yes, you did.

9 Thank you.

10 CHAIR ZIBELMAN: Who's the alternate for Basil
11 Seggos, the Commissioner of the New York State Department of
12 Environmental Conservation. Elizabeth Lewis-Michl, alternative
13 for Dr. Howard Zucker, the Commissioner of the New York State
14 Department of Health and John Rhodes is the alternate for
15 Richard Kauffman, Chair of the New York State Energy Research
16 and Development Authority.

17 And welcome to all the members and thank you
18 for your participation.

19 Let me start with asking Secretary Burgess are
20 there any changes in the matters noticed for today's meeting?

21 SECRETARY BURGESS: There are no changes to the
22 agenda today.

23 CHAIR ZIBELMAN: Okay. So, our present matter
24 is to consider a petition from PSEG Power New York , LLC, for a
25 modification of the Article 10 Certificate that was granted to

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2 them for the repowering of the Bethel Energy Cent -- Center in
3 2002. The Siting Board is hearing this matter in case 15-F-0040
4 and our general counsel, Paul Agresta is going to present this
5 session for us -- this session item.

6 Is -- Paul, do you want to begin?

7 MR. AGRESTA: Thank you, Chair.

8 Today's session item is a relatively simple
9 matter. The Bethlehem Energy Center is an existing 750
10 megawatt, natural gas combined cycle, electric generating
11 facility, with low-sulfur oil backup capability. It's located
12 just a few miles south of the city of Albany and in fact, if
13 you look out the window to my right, you can see it out the
14 window.

15 The -- the Bethlehem Energy Center commenced
16 commercial operation in 2005, pursuant to a Certificate of
17 Environmental Compatibility and Public -- maybe I should slow
18 down a little bit -- that was granted by the Siting Board in
19 2002. It's one of the newest and most efficient gas plants in
20 the state and has modern air pollution controls.

21 The certificate that was granted back in 2002
22 required that the facility be constructed according to the
23 plans originally presented. The owner, PSEG Power New York LLC
24 has petitioned for an amendment to the certificate, to allow
25 the original plans to be modified, to upgrade some of the

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2 hardware of three gas-fired combustion turbine units, with
3 better materials and improved design that enhances aerodynamics
4 and cooling efficiency.

5 If -- if you know what a turbine is, it's kind
6 of like a pinwheel and you -- you burn the natural gas and it
7 shoots a jet of hot air through the -- the pinwheel and the
8 pinwheel turns a shaft, which then turns a machine that
9 generates electricity. And what -- GE has invented some
10 modifications to the -- what I'm calling the pinwheel, the
11 turbine blades, that make it more efficient to catch the air
12 more efficiently and make it turn faster, or with more power
13 and so they want to install that. They're doing it in a lot of
14 plants throughout the state.

15 They also propose some off ware -- some
16 software upgrades that'll increase the efficiency and improve
17 the power output. All of the modifications we're talking about
18 are internal to the facility. There'll be no changes to the
19 footprint on the site. There'll be no external site impacts to
20 water, wetlands, or scenic resources. The upgrades will be
21 done by contractor crews, in activities that are similar to
22 routine maintenance.

23 Overall air emissions will remain within permit
24 limits and applicable air quality standards and the Department
25 of Environmental Conservation has already issued air permits

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2 for the proposed facility upgrades, including conditions as
3 appropriate to maintain the emissions within the identified
4 limits.

5 Increases in noise levels are not expected to
6 occur, but in the event that adverse noise changes are detected
7 during operation of the upgrades, PSEG New York would be
8 required to develop noise reduction or mitigation measures.

9 As to procedure or process before the Siting
10 Board, notice of the petition was served and published in local
11 newspapers, as required by the Siting Board Regulations. After
12 the petition was supplemented with further information that was
13 requested by staff, a notice inviting comments was issued by
14 the Secretary. No comments were received, nor response to any
15 of their notices.

16 The amendment is so minor that there is no
17 hearing requirement and -- but for the certificate requirement
18 that the plants not be modified. This type of modification to
19 an existing power plant would ordinarily not require a
20 regulatory review like -- by a body like this.

21 Department of Public Service Staff has prepared
22 a draft order, proposing that you approve the certificate
23 amendment, subject to conditions and we recommend that you
24 adopt it. The draft order goes in to further detail and
25 includes ordering clause language recommended by staff. The

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2 document describes in detail, how the draft order fully
3 addresses the many requirements in the statute and the draft
4 order was circulated in advanced to all the Siting Board
5 Members and staff has incorporated in to the draft, all
6 suggested edits that were received.

7 So, this -- Chair, this concludes my
8 presentation.

9 CHAIR ZIBELMAN: Okay. Thank you, Paul.

10 Are there any questions or comments for Paul?

11 Hearing none, this is when everyone earns their
12 salary for their walk-on role. So, I'm going to call each of
13 your names and in -- if you would indicate your approval, or
14 dis -- or disapproval of the recommendation by saying aye or
15 no.

16 Beginning with Mr. Ravaschiere, indicate your
17 vote, please?

18 MR. RAVASCHIERE: Aye.

19 CHAIR ZIBELMAN: Ms. -- Member -- I got to put
20 my glasses on.

21 Ms. -- Member Bassinson?

22 MR. BASSINSON: Aye.

23 CHAIR ZIBELMAN: Ms. Lewis-Michl?

24 DR. LEWIS-MICHL: Aye.

25 CHAIR ZIBELMAN: Mr. Rhodes?

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2 MR. RHODES: Aye.

3 CHAIR ZIBELMAN: And the Chair votes aye as
4 well.

5 This session item is approved by unanimous vote
6 of 5-0.

7 Secretary Burgess, are there any other items
8 that come in front of us today?

9 SECRETARY BURGESS: There are no other items
10 for today.

11 CHAIR ZIBELMAN: Okay. So, that is it.

12 My thanks to all of you for coming and joining
13 us and we're -- our session is adjourned. We'll see you next
14 time.

15 MR. RHODES: Thank you.

16 CHAIR ZIBELMAN: Thank you.

17 (The hearing concluded.)

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STATE OF NEW YORK

I, HANNAH ALLEN, do hereby certify that the foregoing was reported by me, in the cause, at the time and place, as stated in the caption hereto, at Page 1 hereof; that the foregoing typewritten transcription consisting of pages 1 through 8, is a true record of all proceedings had at the hearing.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name, this the 19th day of January, 2017.

HANNAH ALLEN, Reporter

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